



Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 4 March 2008

Current Nationwide



[For info click here](#)

- According to the Associated Press, the USS New York, an amphibious assault ship built with scrap steel from the ruins of the World Trade Center, was christened Saturday. The bow stem contains 7.5 tons of steel from the site. The billion-dollar, 25,000-ton vessel is 684 feet long, 105 feet wide. It is the fifth in a new class of warship, designed for missions that include special operations against terrorists. (See item [7](#))
- The Associated Press reports four large homes are burning at a “Street of Dreams” model home development north of Woodinville, Washington, and the Snohomish County District Seven chief told KING-TV that a sign saying ELF was left at the scene. ELF or Earth Liberation Front has claimed responsibility for other arsons, including one at the University of Washington in 2001 for which a woman is now on trial in Tacoma. (See item [26](#))

DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report Fast Jump

Production Industries: [Energy; Chemical; Nuclear Reactors, Materials and Waste; Defense Industrial Base; Dams](#)

Service Industries: [Banking and Finance; Transportation; Postal and Shipping; Information Technology; Communications; Commercial Facilities](#)

Sustenance and Health: [Agriculture and Food; Water; Public Health and Healthcare](#)

Federal and State: [Government Facilities; Emergency Services; National Monuments and Icons](#)

Energy Sector

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: Physical: ELEVATED, Cyber: ELEVATED

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) – <http://www.esisac.com>]

1. *March 3, Associated Press* – (International) **Oil jumps to new record on dollar’s fall.** Oil prices surged to a new record high Monday as the dollar weakened to another low against the Euro. Light, sweet crude for April delivery rose \$1.93 to \$103.77 on the New York Mercantile Exchange after earlier rising as high as \$103.95. That is higher than the price of \$103.76 that many analysts believe oil hit in 1980, when adjusted for inflation

into 2008 dollars.

Source: http://biz.yahoo.com/ap/080303/oil_prices.html?.v=8

2. *March 3, Hess Corporation* – (New York) **Hess agrees to fine.** A fine totaling some \$1.1 million will be paid by Hess Corp. for petroleum storage violations in New York. The firm made an agreement with the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) late last week for the payment of the fine. Under the accord, more than 100 violations at the Hess oil storage facility in Brooklyn have been resolved. These violations date back from the 1990s and involved non-compliance with storage regulations and the repair of a bulkhead without the proper permits. Hess will clean up some 65 gas stations and oil storage facilities in New York City and the Hudson Valley as part of the agreements.

Source: <http://www.hessenergy.com/common/NewsItem.aspx?ArticleId=18491588>

3. *March 1, Palm Beach Post* – (Florida) **Human error caused outage.** A blunder by a field engineer working alone at one of Florida Power & Light Co.'s (FPL) substations appears to have triggered the blackout that left at least two million Floridians without power on February 26. The FPL employee was trying to diagnose a problem with a piece of equipment in west Miami when he violated company policy by disabling two sets of relays – essentially fuse switches – that are designed to isolate electrical problems, the utility's preliminary investigation revealed Friday. The employee then tested the equipment, sparking a short-circuit that dropped voltage across the state's power grid. There is no indication that FPL's systems or safety procedures contributed to the problem, FPL's president said. FPL took steps this week, including refresher courses for field engineers, to make sure the problem does not happen again, he said. FPL will continue to investigate the incident with the Florida Reliability Coordinating Council and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Source:

http://www.palmbeachpost.com/business/content/business/epaper/2008/03/01/c1a_fpl_0301.html

4. *March 1, Star-Telegram* – (Texas) **PUC investigating state's electric grid crisis.** The Texas Public Utility Commission has opened an inquiry into last week's plummet in wind power production that nearly led to rolling blackouts across Texas. The Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) – which responded to the drop in production by cutting power to large industrial customers who agree to forgo power during grid emergencies in exchange for lower rates – acknowledged that they violated their own rules by not issuing a general conservation alert during the incident. ERCOT attorneys said that by appealing for dramatic energy conservation measures, they could have actually made matters worse because the organization had already taken steps to restore stability to the grid. An ERCOT spokesperson said it remains unclear whether the organization should have done something differently Tuesday night, or whether the rules themselves should be changed.

Source: http://www.star-telegram.com/state_news/story/504967.html

Chemical Industry Sector

Nothing to Report

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste Sector

5. *March 2, Associated Press* – (Idaho) **Worker inhales radioactive material, no threat to public.** Officials on Sunday were assessing the best way to clean up the Sabia Inc. building in Bonneville County, Idaho, where a worker inhaled an unknown amount of radioactive material strontium-90 on Friday. An Idaho National Guard spokesman said the contamination is contained and there is no threat to the public. The worker sought treatment at a local hospital and was released. Three others in the area were not affected. Source: <http://www.theolympian.com/northwest/story/376637.html>
6. *March 2, Tri-City Herald* – (Washington) **Cleanup may begin on radioactive waste spread by animals at Hanford.** Plans are being developed to start cleaning up the largest waste site near central Hanford, Washington, later this year. The 13-square-mile is just south of the BC Cribs and Trenches Area where 50 million gallons of liquid waste contaminated with radioactive salts were discharged during the Cold War. Animals attracted to the salts spread the waste across miles of the Hanford desert. “This area has a large spread of contamination on the surface with the ability to move around with our winds,” said the Department of Energy (DOE) assistant manager for central Hanford cleanup. An engineering analysis prepared by Fluor Hanford for DOE concluded that the surface soil in contaminated spots should be dug up and hauled to a lined landfill for low-level radioactive waste a few miles to the west. DOE, the Washington state Department of Ecology, and the Environmental Protection Agency are taking public comment on the plan until March 26. Then work could begin to dig up soil later this year. The proposal estimates that about 237,000 cubic yards of dirt will need to be dug up in cleanup work that could take three years. Source: <http://www.tri-cityherald.com/901/story/106285.html>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Defense Industrial Base Sector

7. *March 1, Associated Press* – (National) **Ship built with WTC steel christened.** The USS New York, an amphibious assault ship built with scrap steel from the ruins of the World Trade Center, was christened Saturday. The bow stem contains 7.5 tons of steel from the site. The billion-dollar, 25,000-ton vessel is 684 feet long, 105 feet wide. It is the fifth in a new class of warship, designed for missions that include special operations against terrorists. It can carry a crew of about 360 sailors and 700 combat-ready Marines to be delivered ashore by helicopters and assault craft. Source: http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080302/ap_on_re_us/uss_new_york; ylt=ArgMVP1tiHcc

Banking and Finance Sector

8. *March 3, Associated Press* – (National) **Credit crisis seen as economic threat.** The cascading fallout from the subprime loan crisis, barely a cloud on the horizon a year ago, is now viewed by experts as the economy's gravest threat. In a survey released Monday, 34 percent of the members of the National Association for Business Economics ranked the financial market turmoil from those loan defaults as the No. 1 threat to the economy over the next two years. That compares with 18 percent from an August survey, when the most serious threat was seen by 20 percent of the economists as terrorism and the conflicts in the Middle East. A year ago, the credit crisis did not even register as a chief threat. The questioning of 259 economists took place during the first two weeks of February. At the heart of financial institutions' problems are securities backed by subprime mortgages. They have gone into default at record rates because of the housing market's steep slump. These loans were extended to borrowers with weak credit histories. On other topics, the NABE survey found only 35 percent of respondents ranked the government's budget policies as "about right," compared with 45 percent in August. That probably reflects projections that the budget deficit could hit all-time highs this year and next.

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/03/AR2008030300279.html>

9. *March 3, WAVY 10 Norfolk* – (Virginia) **Counterfeit check cashing scam busted in Va. Beach.** A counterfeit check cashing ring has been busted in Virginia Beach. Police arrested eleven people in connection with the operation and are looking for many more. It all started back in November 2007, when banks contacted police about hot checks. This was not a high class or high tech operation. The ring leader used inexpensive equipment; a laptop, and a printer that you can purchase at any store. Check printing software was purchased, along with paper designed for checks. "The ring leader would come out and print these checks out and he'd have runners. Those runners go out to the different banks and cash the checks. He'd have those runners come back and he'd pay them to cash the checks," said a police official. The checks were drawn on three major banks; Wachovia, Suntrust and Towne Bank. In total, the ring has linked the scammers with \$30,000 in bad checks that were cashed at any place that cashed payroll checks. Police have warrants for 10 others and expect to obtain warrants for up to 30 more people. Each person will face numerous felony charges.

Source: <http://www.wavy.com/Global/story.asp?S=7948711&nav=23ii>

10. *March 3, vnunet.com* – (National) **Extra staff needed to boost bank IT security.** The number of suspicious and unauthorized intrusions into bank computer systems could be reduced by boosting security staff levels and improving governance over outsourcing. The international president of the Information Systems Audit and Control Association said that unauthorized intrusions and bank account losses at US financial institutions have increased, and the cost to the banks per incident has soared. She also said that IT

staffing levels are an increasing worry for managers, as is their reliance on external outsourcing. “If banks are to reduce the number of intrusions on their systems, and so regain the customer trust lost in recent years, they need to implement improved IT governance based on frameworks such as Cobit,” she said. “This includes consideration of resourcing, training, control automation and the monitoring of internal and external performance and controls.” She explained that, although the financial sector is ahead in implementation of IT governance, there are still 25 per cent of financial sector respondents not yet doing anything about the problem.

Source: <http://www.vnunet.com/vnunet/news/2210961/extra-staff-needed-boost-bank>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Transportation Sector

11. *March 3, USA Today* – (National) **TSA tries airport security lanes for families.** The Transportation Security Administration is experimenting with checkpoint lanes designed for families to ease the pressure on parents struggling through an airport with young children. In one of the first efforts to ease airport security for infrequent travelers, “family” lanes are being tested at the Denver and Salt Lake City airports alongside “expert” lanes for travelers who know every nuance of security screening and lanes for “casual” travelers. Screening is the same in each lane, and the program is voluntary. Segregated lanes could open around the country if the tests show the concept speeds up security lines. The Air Transport Association, which represents major airlines, supports the concept. Business travelers can “opt to the lane that allows them to move through the process quicker,” a spokesman said. However, the concept is criticized by the man, whose Verified Identity Pass has been hired by 14 airports to speed up security for fee-paying customers. “Everyone who’s traveling with a kid is ghettoized,” he said. “Adding to the frustration of certain people so you lessen the frustration of others is not good public policy.”

Source: http://www.usatoday.com/travel/flights/2008-03-02-familylanes_N.htm?csp=34

12. *March 3, Press-Telegram* – (National) **Many still without Port ID.** Federal authorities are reporting growing compliance with a federal port worker ID program, but warn that many remain un-enrolled in local ports. The Transportation Worker Identification Credential, or TWIC, was designed in the months after 9/11 to screen dockworkers, mariners, truck drivers, rail personnel and others requiring regular access to marine terminals. By September 25, workers without a card will be denied access unless accompanied by a credentialed worker or federally accredited security employee. Retailers and shippers worry that a national shortage of workers may occur later this year - potentially creating backlogs in the supply chain - if workers fail or refuse to obtain cards on time. Nationally, 45,000 have received TWIC cards since last December, with another 190,000 enrolled but awaiting final approval, said an official with the Transportation Security Administration. TSA officials estimate as many as 1.5 million may eventually need a card.

Source: http://www.presstelegram.com/ci_8430431?source=rss

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Postal and Shipping Sector

Nothing to Report

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Agriculture and Food Sector

13. *March 3, San Francisco Chronicle* – (California) **Some alfalfa sprouts recalled due to Salmonella bacteria.** The California Department of Public Health on Sunday warned consumers not to eat certain brands of alfalfa sprouts because they may be contaminated with Salmonella. Several illnesses have been reported across the state, including one in Contra Costa County and two in San Francisco. Two manufacturers voluntarily recalled their products from grocery stores and wholesale distributors, officials said. The recalled products include: Salad Cosmo Alfalfa Sprouts, sold by Salad Cosmo USA Corp. in 2.5-ounce containers with white and green labels and in clear 1-pound bags with blue labeling. Product codes on these containers are 0219, 0220, 0221, 0222, 0223, 0224, 0226, 0227, 0228, 0229, 0302, and 0303; Always Fresh and Alfa One Alfalfa Sprouts, produced by J.H. Caldwell and Sons, Inc. in 4-ounce and 5-ounce containers, were also recalled. Product codes on these containers are 202182, 202192, 202212, 202222, 202232, 202252, 202262, and 202272.

Source: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/03/03/BATGVCFDE.DTL>

14. *March 3, High Plains/Midwest Ag Journal* – (National) **Farmers urged to review new DHS chemical guidelines.** Farmers and agribusiness operators should review chemical guidelines and determine whether they will be affected by a new U.S. Department of Homeland Security regulation, according to the director of the office of bio-security at the Southwest Border Food Safety and Defense Center at New Mexico State University's College of Agriculture and Home Economics. "In an effort to increase the security of high-risk chemical facilities, the Department of Homeland Security recently released a list of chemicals that, if possessed by a facility in a specified quantity, would require them to complete a Chemical Security Anti-Terrorism Top-Screen assessment," he said. "Those required to go through this initial screening must do so before January 21." Failure to comply with the regulations could result in civil penalties of up to \$25,000 per day or the shutdown of the facility. For more information on the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards, or to view the chemicals of interest list, visit www.dhs.gov/chemicalsecurity.

Source:

<http://www.hpj.com/archives/2007/dec07/dec31/FarmersurgedtoreviewnewDHSc.cfm?title=Farmers%20urged%20to%20review%20new%20DHS%20chemical%20guidelines>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Water Sector

15. *March 2, Associated Press* – (Alabama, Florida, Georgia) **Feds say water negotiations have failed.** The Interior secretary acknowledged Saturday that White House-brokered water negotiations among Alabama, Florida, and Georgia have failed. Without an agreement, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other federal agencies will begin implementing a water-sharing plan of their own, he said in a letter to the governors. The secretary said the talks, which began last fall, yielded more progress in three months than at any time during the last 18 years. But he said the negotiators could not reach a comprehensive agreement and called it “unfortunate” that the states are moving forward with ongoing litigation. The three states have been feuding for nearly two decades over water rights in the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint and the Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoosa river basins, which run south through Georgia into Alabama and the Florida panhandle.
Source:
<http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5iYOMIAzXREFVjcYtNagkheasCXwAD8V4U10G0>

16. *March 1, Seattle Times* – (Washington) **Western Washington cities expect enough water for 40-50 years.** Water supplies in Western Washington will shrink by as much as 25 percent over the next decade, but with new sources and conservation there should be enough for the next 40 or 50 years, according to new studies. Water managers in Seattle, Tacoma, and Everett all expect they can adjust their water systems to make sure there is enough water for everyone, as long as fast-growing cities like Bellevue start to seek their own source of drinking water. Smaller utilities or areas outside King, Snohomish, and Pierce counties were not covered by the studies and the full impact of global warming in the region has not been gauged. Plus the research did not examine how water supply from wells could be affected. The studies found that by 2075 the three utilities of Seattle, Tacoma, and Everett together could lose as much as 16 percent of its water supply or 77 million gallons a day compared with today’s supplies.
Source:
http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/localnews/2004253727_apwawaterstudy.html

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Public Health and Healthcare Sector

17. *March 3, San Francisco Chronicle* – (California) **S.F. braces for major health care cuts.** San Francisco’s Health at Home program, which employs 13 nurses and serves 350 chronically ill, low-income patients, is up for closure on April 15. The program is run by the city’s Department of Public Health. San Francisco’s budget landscape is the worst it has been in years, and the Public Health Department, which accounts for about a fifth of the city’s \$6 billion annual budget, is facing the worst financial outlook anybody can remember. Doctors, nurses, and patients are alarmed about the looming cuts, which total \$33 million. The seven-member Health Commission will hold a hearing on Health at Home and other programs up for immediate cuts at its meeting Tuesday, and will hold future hearings on programs scheduled for cuts in the next fiscal year, which starts July 1. Other proposed public health cuts to be made either immediately or in the next fiscal year include closing the worker’s compensation clinic at San Francisco General

Hospital, closing a 24-hour drop-in center for homeless people to receive referrals to housing and services, and reducing hours for the oral surgery clinic and operating rooms at San Francisco General. The proposal would also close a wing at Laguna Honda Hospital, reduce services to mentally ill people, reduce in-home help for gunshot victims, eliminate funding for health initiatives in Bayview-Hunters Point, and cut 15 percent of all money that goes to nonprofits that run community health programs.

Source: <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2008/03/03/MN6BVC4M1.DTL>

18. *March 2, Agence France-Presse* – (Nevada) **Clinic closed in Las Vegas in health scandal.** The city of Las Vegas has shut down the Endoscopy Center of Southern Nevada where up to 40,000 people may have been exposed to hepatitis C and the HIV virus through the reuse of syringes and vials, officials said on Sunday. Officials are asking about 40,000 people to be tested for hepatitis B and C and HIV because of unsafe medical practices there. Health authorities launched an investigation into the clinic after six former patients were diagnosed with hepatitis. Nurses at the clinic were told “to reuse syringes when administering anesthesia” and “to reuse vials of medication,” the city said, citing a probe by public health agencies. The local prosecutors’ office said it was closely examining the case and raised the possibility of filing charges against the center. The clinic did not comment directly on the allegations, but expressed concern for patients infected and said it had undertaken new precautions.

Source:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20080303/ts_alt_afp/ushealthhospitaldisease_080303002618;_ylt=AiDAto3G5gGnb4Dz9MnjWLnYa7gF

Government Facilities Sector

19. *March 3, Associated Press* – (Georgia) **Georgia police arrest man suspected of bringing gun on college campus.** Authorities took into custody a man suspected of carrying a gun Monday onto the main campus of Middle Georgia College in Cochran, Georgia, the Bleckley County Sheriff’s Office said. The man was not a student at the school. Earlier Monday morning, the college was placed under a lockdown after a student reported seeing a man with a gun. The college has resumed normal operations and the lockdown was lifted around noon, said the college’s president.

Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,334588,00.html>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Emergency Services Sector

20. *March 3, Miami Hurricane* – (Florida) **Disaster drill prepares organization for action.** A disaster drill conducted on the University of Miami Cobb Stadium in Coral Gables, Florida, was to prepare the Canes Emergency Response Team (CERT), a student-run organization whose members are prepared to assist during disasters and respond to a problem to which the police and firefighters cannot react immediately.

Their ability to handle this situation was graded by professionals in different emergency fields. CERT's main objective in this exercise was to apply basic first aid and to gather the wounded to make it easier for the paramedics to bring them to the hospital. In the mock drill, Coral Gables paramedics only had four ambulances and there were 34 victims. If the police and fire departments were available for this incident then CERT would perform crowd control operations instead. However, CERT may be needed and has been needed in the past. During the blackout last week, city personnel were flooded with emergencies such as people being stuck in elevators. They were stretched thinner when two people were necessary to direct traffic at each intersection in the area. CERT members were able to assist and lessen the strain on the police and fire departments. Although the members of CERT knew there was going to be a drill on Saturday, they did not know what or where the situation was going to be. The members of the outgoing executive board made these plans and kept them private. CERT members were notified with text messages through the Emergency Notification Network about the practice situation.

Source:

<http://media.www.thehurricaneonline.com/media/storage/paper479/news/2008/03/03/News/Disaster.Drill.Prepare.Organization.For.Action-3247618.shtml>

21. *March 3, PHNS* – (National) **PHNS is first IT outsourcer to receive National Emergency Telecommunications Service Priority.** PHNS, a Texas-based IT outsourcing company, announced that it is the first information technology outsourcing company to qualify for priority restoration and telecommunication services under the National Communications System/Telecommunication Services Priority (TSP) program. The TSP program provides priority telecommunication services that are critical to national security and emergency preparedness, particularly for coordinating and responding to natural disasters such as hurricanes, floods, earthquakes and forest fires, and man-made disasters such as terrorist attacks. The TSP priority will enable PHNS to obtain Government Emergency Telecommunications Service and Wireless Priority Service so that PHNS can continue to provide critical IT services to its 400 hospital customers during national or regional emergencies or disasters. "Qualification under the Telecommunications Service Priority program enables PHNS to ensure that all our hospital customers will have critical telecommunications services so that they can continue to provide uninterrupted healthcare services in the event of natural or man-made disasters or emergencies," said an official responsible for Business Continuity/Quality/Compliance for PHNS' IT Division.

Source:

http://www.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20080303005144&newsLang=en

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Information Technology

22. *March 2, Government Executive* – (National) **OMB reports 60 percent increase in information security incidents.** The number of information security incidents reported by federal agencies jumped from 5,146 in fiscal 2006 to 12,986 last year, with a 70

percent increase in unauthorized access to federal networks alone, according to a report from the Office of Management released Saturday. The results – which also show a sharp increase in reports of improper usage due mostly to a security breach at the Veteran Affairs Department – reflect better detection of threats, but also call into question the effectiveness of systems for certifying agencies’ information security. OMB submitted its fiscal 2007 report on the implementation of the 2002 Federal Information Security Management Act to Congress Friday. Under the law, chief information officers and inspectors general are required to conduct annual reviews of their agencies’ information security programs. According to the report, agencies documented 2,321 incidents of unauthorized access in fiscal 2007, up from 706 in 2006, and 3,305 incidents of improper usage of networks, compared to 638 the previous year. Two-thirds of the latter jump stemmed from incidents at the VA. The number of incidents deemed unconfirmed and warranting further review also increased dramatically, from 912 to 4,056. “The fact that the number [of incidents] is going up does not reflect worse security, it reflects worse attacks,” the director of research at the SANS Institute, a nonprofit cybersecurity research organization. The report also showed that 92 percent of the total of 10,304 federal information systems are certified and accredited, compared to 88 percent in 2006 as well as an overall decrease in the percentage of employees receiving security awareness training between 2006 and 2007, from 91 to 85 percent. Source: <http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/0308/030208a1.htm>

23. *March 2, Sunday Times* – (International) **Google Earth showed protesters way to conquer parliament.** Demonstrators revealed Saturday that they had used Google Earth to plot their protest on the roof of the Houses of Parliament in England, last week, against the expansion of Heathrow. The website, which allows users to zoom in on satellite photographs of Earth, “showed us all the walkways, steps and other details we needed to make our way across the roof from the door to the far side where the public could see us”, said one of the five protesters. The planning for the stunt began last autumn after the government published documents for a public consultation on a possible third runway at Heathrow. A 23-year-old with a first-class degree in English literature from Cambridge described how they were able to map out the interior of the Palace of Westminster without raising suspicions. “We sent in a reconnaissance group who simply wandered around till they found the route to the roof ending in an open door. The fag butts around it showed it was being used by smokers,” she said. They managed to recruit a young Commons insider who, thanks to having a security pass, was able to carry the banners, handcuffs (bought from a Soho shop) and other equipment past the body scanners and X-ray machines that are supposed to protect the buildings. In all about 15 activists were involved. Though some now face court action, they are determined to continue their campaign. Source: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article3458431.ece>

Internet Alert Dashboard

To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US-CERT at soc@us-cert.gov or visit their Website: <http://www.us-cert.gov>.

Information on IT information sharing and analysis can be found at the IT ISAC (Information Sharing and Analysis Center) Website: <https://www.it-isac.org/>.

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Communications Sector

24. *March 3, US Cellular* – (Virginia) **U.S. Cellular to expand wireless access in West Virginia’s rural communities.** The West Virginia Public Service Commission (PSC) has granted U.S. Cellular designation as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier (ETC). This enables the company to access an estimated \$7 million annually from the federal Universal Service Fund (USF) to build and expand wireless infrastructure in the state’s rural and underserved communities. U.S. Cellular is projected to construct up to 70 new cell sites within the next five years, based upon the continuing availability of USF support at forecasted levels. This expansion will provide new or improved service to an estimated 405,000 residents in rural parts of the state.

Source: <http://biz.yahoo.com/prnews/080303/nem087.html?v=36>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Commercial Facilities Sector

25. *March 3, Associated Press* – (Washington) **Fire ignites ‘Street of Dreams’ home development; ELF sign left at scene.** Four large homes are burning at a “Street of Dreams” model home development north of Woodinville, Washington, and the Snohomish County District Seven chief told KING-TV that a sign saying ELF was left at the scene. ELF or Earth Liberation Front has claimed responsibility for other arsons, including one at the University of Washington in 2001 for which a woman is now on trial in Tacoma. The chief also told KOMO-TV that the fires are suspicious because they were set in multiple places in separate homes. There were no reports of injuries. The official says some of the homes were still under construction. The Street of Dreams is an annual showcase of luxury homes in the Seattle area.

Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,334539,00.html>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

National Monuments & Icons Sector

26. *March 2, McClatchy* – (California) **Oil exploration sought in Calif. national monument.** A subsidiary of Occidental Petroleum has notified the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) that it would like to explore for oil in a central California national monument. A BLM spokesman said the agency can do nothing to stop Vintage Production from testing for oil under the Carrizo Plain National Monument in eastern San Luis Obispo County because the company has owned the mineral rights there since before the monument was created in 2001. But Vintage’s holdings are under the heart of the monument grounds, and whatever it does cannot help but affect the natural grasslands and wildlife diversity of the area. The monument contains the last remaining vestiges of San Joaquin Valley grasslands and is home to the greatest concentration of endangered species in the country. Seismic testing will determine whether there is oil and gas in Vintage’s holdings, which lie beneath 30,000 acres of the monument. That in

turn could set a value for the mineral estate. With such a value established, the BLM could begin negotiations to trade other oil rights for the monument property or open talks with the BLM's monument partners, the state Department of Fish and Game, and The Nature Conservancy, for an outright purchase.

Source: <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/homepage/story/29204.html>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

Dams Sector

27. *March 3, Oregonian* – (Oregon) **Damaged gate removed; John Day Dam open.** A floating bulkhead is installed so boats can use the navigation lock again. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers removed a damaged gate and reopened the John Day Dam's navigation lock Sunday evening. Columbia River traffic had been halted since Thursday night, when two empty grain barges accompanied by a tug collided with the 125-ton gate while the lock was filling. Two cranes lifted the gate onto two barges so engineers can determine whether it should be repaired or replaced. Depending on the damage, that could take months or even more than a year, said a Corps spokesman. Until then, ships will need 90 minutes rather than the usual 20 minutes to clear the locks because the gate must be operated manually.

Source:

<http://www.oregonlive.com/news/oregonian/index.ssf?/base/news/120451470687461.xml&coll=7>

28. *March 2, Associated Press* – (West) **West looking again at building new dams.** The Western states' era of massive dam construction effectively ended in 1966 with the completion of Glen Canyon Dam. But the region's booming population and growing fears about climate change have state governments once again studying construction of dams to capture more winter rain and spring snowmelt for use in dry summer months. The population of the Western states grew nearly 20 percent in the 1990s, to more than 64 million, and continues to swell even as climate change poses new threats to the water supply. Ironically, consideration of new dams comes even as older ones are being torn down across the country because of environmental concerns – worries that will likely pose big obstacles to new construction. There are lots of other ideas for increasing water supplies in the West, including conservation, storing water in natural underground aquifers, pipelines to carry water from the mountains, desalination plants to make drinking water from the ocean, and small dams to serve local areas. Most of those ideas are much more popular than big new dams.

Source:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080302/ap_on_re_us/damming_again;_ylt=AnWwmcLkPLVu2EKlBjCRAvFG2ocA

29. *March 2, BC Local News* – (International) **B.C. to be consulted on U.S. dam plan.** Washington State will be a “good neighbour” as it conducts detailed study of a proposed dam on the Similkameen River, a state official has assured the British Columbia government. A proposed dam at Shanker's Bend, just south of the U.S.-Canadian border

near Osoyoos, dates back to 1948 after the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers studied the Columbia River and its tributaries. The idea was revived last year when the state gave Okanogan County a \$300,000 grant to begin study of three proposals, to improve state water supplies as well as generating power. The 80-metre “high dam” proposal would back water up into British Columbia, affecting the Lower Similkameen and Chopaka native reserves. A lower dam proposal would contain flooding to the U.S. side of the border, and a third run-of-river option would create a smaller seasonal pool on the U.S. side that would avoid flooding the community of Nighthawk, Washington.

Source: <http://www.bclocalnews.com/news/16162962.html>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

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